



CAN TV

19, 21, 27, 36, 42

30 years of Putting People First

July 10, 2013

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: In the Matter of Accessibility of User Interfaces, and Video Programming Guides and Menus, MB Docket No. 12-108, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 13-77)

Dear Commissioners:

Chicago Access Corporation ("CAN TV") files this letter in response to the above mentioned Notice regarding the accessibility of user interfaces, and video programming guides and menus.

CAN TV administers five local, noncommercial public, educational and government (PEG) access channels in Chicago. Thousands of local groups and residents create an average of 140 new, original hours of programming each week for cablecast on CAN TV, more than Chicago's local broadcast stations combined. CAN TV's channels reach over a million potential viewers in 493,000 cabled homes within the Chicago City limits. CAN TV channels are carried on Comcast, RCN, and WOW systems as well as on AT&T U-verse.

CAN TV carries [Chicagoland Radio Information Service \(CRIS Radio\)](#) for listeners with a wide range of disabilities. This is a valuable service for the visually impaired as local volunteers read to the listening audience from a variety of local news sources. Carriage of this service on CAN TV enables CRIS to reach more people via cable television.

A locally produced disability rights program on CAN TV is *ADAPT of Chicago Productions* (*ADAPT*.) This bi-weekly television series has been cablecast on CAN TV for 14 years, with local, original programming created by a group of Chicago residents who are themselves disabled.

Producers, hosts and crew for *ADAPT* are committed to creating programming of and by the disability community and to educating the public about disabilities. The director is quadriplegic, the technical director is legally blind, and members have a range of other physical and developmental disabilities.

In order to reach the broadest audience, *ADAPT* productions are closed-captioned for the hearing impaired. Past programs have featured a protest against state budget cuts affecting the disability community, how to secure housing for people with disabilities, a look at difficulties people with

disabilities encounter in the workplace, and a program urging the Governor to close down an abusive nursing home.

CAN TV program titles and descriptions are carried by Comcast, RCN and WOW in Chicago. While CAN TV's program descriptions can indicate which programs are closed captioned, people with auditory disabilities are not made aware of that distinction.

Even more problematic for the disability community is that AT&T carries no listings for CAN TV programs on its electronic or print guides. AT&T's U-verse system clearly discriminates against people with disabilities who are seeking helpful local programming like *ADAPT* or CRIS Radio. It is impossible for anyone from the disability community to make informed local choices based on AT&T's treatment of hundreds of PEG channels via Channel 99. The only identification of a multitude of different channels is a generic listing for "Local Government, Education and Public Access."

To make matters worse, the process to find a specific program is cumbersome, technologically regressive, and discriminatory. The difficulties AT&T's U-verse system poses for the disability community are evident, as illustrated in a real-time video demo at www.KeepUsConnected.org. The visually impaired are clearly disadvantaged on AT&T's U-verse system in terms of finding and benefitting from CAN TV local channels and programming compared to how simple it is to simply remember the right channel number in order to locate programming of interest on other channels.

On March 6, 2009, *ADAPT* member, Gloria Nichols, filed comments addressed to Ms. Marlene Dortch in relation to CSR-8126, *ACM et al*, MB Docket No. 09-13. In those comments, *ADAPT* urged the FCC to grant the *ACM et al* Petition in that docket. But the FCC has failed to act on that Petition to date.

With the FCC's commitment to localism and diversity, we urge a response to this enquiry that affirmatively acts on behalf of and in service to the disability community. Carriage of program titles and descriptions in an accessible manner is an essential link for the local community. We urge the Commission to adopt rules that prevent the kind of discrimination against the disability community evidenced by AT&T's U-verse product.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barbara Popovic". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Barbara Popovic
Executive Director